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72 OF THE PLANET'S BEST ARRIVE IN SARASOTA FLORIDA FOR THE MUCH ANTICIPATED WORLD CUP FINAL



The excitement has been building after a gripping World Cup Series this year and now the wait is over, the climactic season finale has finally arrived. The World Cup Final begins in earnest. This 3-day competition, which takes at the Polo Club at Lakewood Ranch in Sarasota-Bradenton, has no qualification phase, it is straight Finals for both Women and Men.

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There is a pact schedule for the athletes, with the opening ceremony taking place at the world renowned Ringling Museum before the action begins on Friday 6 June with the women's draw.

72 of the very best pentathletes in the world go head-to-head for one of the sport's most prestigious prizes.

Saturday will then see the men battle it out with the Mixed Relay on Sunday.

All eyes in the **women's competition** will be on the USA's **Margaux Isaksen**, the current World No. 5, who carries the hopes of the host nation. The 22-year-old has placed 8th or higher in all major UIPM competitions she has entered since the London 2012 Olympic Games, claiming impressive victories last year at both World Cup #2 in Rio de Janeiro and at Champion of Champions in Doha. She has the skills and mental toughness to come good in front of an expectant crowd.

She declared, "I have trained extremely hard in recent months and I am feeling strong. All the hard work has been done now, time to put it to the test. I cannot wait to get started."

The women's draw will also feature reigning Olympic, World Champion and World No.1 **Laura Asadauskaite**. The Lithuanian winning machine is one the fiercest competitors out there and one of the toughest and she will be aiming for nothing other than gold in Sarasota. Don't be fooled by her diminutive frame, she is one the very best pentathletes ever produced and has the ability to blow the rest of the competition away. The others will have to step it up to challenge her. It will be fascinating to watch.

Along with Margaux Isaksen, the in-form **Oktawia Nowacka** from Poland will be one to watch after having taken two silvers and one gold in her last 3 World Cup Series appearances. Humble yet ruthless, she has what it takes to go all the way.

China has travelled with their best as **Qian Chen**, **Wanxia Liang** and former boxer **Xiaonan Zhang** all line-up her at the World Cup Final. The trio have each got the tolls in their arsenal to reach the podium. **Yane Marques** of Brazil, the 2012 Olympic bronze medallist, will also be in the reckoning for honours, along with Russia's **Donata Rimsaite**, **Viktoria Tereshuk** of Ukraine and the rejuvenated Canadian **Melanie McCann**.

2008 Beijing gold medallist **Lena Schoneborn** has been looking solid and consistent of late and will be keen to lead her country to glory. The classy German is joined in the draw by her compatriots **Janine Kohlmann** and **Annika Schleu**.

The men's competition will be too close to call with the so much talent on show. World No.1 **Justinas Kinderis**, Russian duo **Ilia Frolov** and **Aleksander Lesun**, **Amro El Geziry**, to name but a few, are all in with a shout of taking the top prize. They are all oozing with confidence as we reach the stage in the season where they mean business.

France have proved time and time again that they are one of the strongest nations around and with **Christopher Patte**, **Valentin Belaud** and World No. 2 **Valentin Prades** in their ranks, expect them to be right in the mix. Prades won the World Cup Final last year and has not really come to life this season but he hopes to put it right this weekend.

He told us, "My fencing was not great earlier this year but I feel fresh and hungry to defend this title so we will see. My training has been quality and with the support of my teammates and coaches, anything is possible."

2014 World Cup #2 winner **Riccardo de Luca** of Italy will be a definite contender here as will Ukraine's **Pavlo Tymoshchenko**, Czech rising star **Jan Kuf** and Chinese sensation **Jianli Guo**.

The home nations hope lie with **Nathan Schrimsher** and **Dennis Bowsher**. Will they be able to handle the pressure or will they thrive under the expectations? On ething is for sure, they are always a surprise or two in store.

List of athletes

Full schedule

- Friday 6 June – Women's Final
- Saturday 7 June Men's Final
- Sunday 8 June Mixed Relay

The Riding and Combined events will be stream LIVE on the UIPM youtube channel. Subscribe [HERE](#)

Visit the competition's official website [HERE](#)